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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL,
THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS, THE
EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK AND THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK**

**Preparing for the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union on 30
March 2019**

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1. Context

*The United Kingdom's decision to leave the Union creates uncertainties that have the
potential to cause disruption*

European Council (Article 50), 29 April 2017¹

*The European Council calls upon the Commission, the High Representative of the Union for
Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Member States to continue the work on
preparedness at all levels for the consequences of the UK withdrawal, taking into account all
possible outcomes.*

European Council (Article 50), 29 March 2018²

*The European Council renews its call upon Member States, Union institutions and all
stakeholders to step up their work on preparedness at all levels and for all outcomes.*

European Council (Article 50), 29 June 2018³

The United Kingdom has decided to leave the European Union

On 30 March 2019⁴, the United Kingdom will leave the European Union and become a third country.

Irrespective of the scenario envisaged, this will cause significant disruption for European businesses. The European Council has repeatedly underlined the need for preparedness action and on 29 June 2018 made a renewed call on Member States Union institutions and all stakeholders to step up their work on preparedness at all levels and for scenarios⁵. This Communication describes the ongoing preparedness work, outlines the preparedness actions taken so far and points to the various challenges ahead.

¹ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21763/29-euco-art50-guidelinesen.pdf>.

² <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/33458/23-euco-art50-guidelines.pdf>.

³ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/35966/29-euco-art50-conclusions-en.pdf>.

⁴ The United Kingdom submitted on 29 March 2017 the notification of its intention to withdraw from the Union pursuant to Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union. This means that, unless a ratified withdrawal agreement establishes another date or, in accordance with Article 50(3) of the Treaty on European Union, the European Council, in agreement with the United Kingdom, unanimously decides that the Treaties cease to apply at a later date, all Union primary and secondary law will cease to apply to the United Kingdom from 30 March 2019, 00:00h (CET). At this moment in time the Commission has received no indication that the United Kingdom may request a prolongation of its EU membership.

⁵ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2018/06/29/20180629-euco-conclusions-art-50/>.

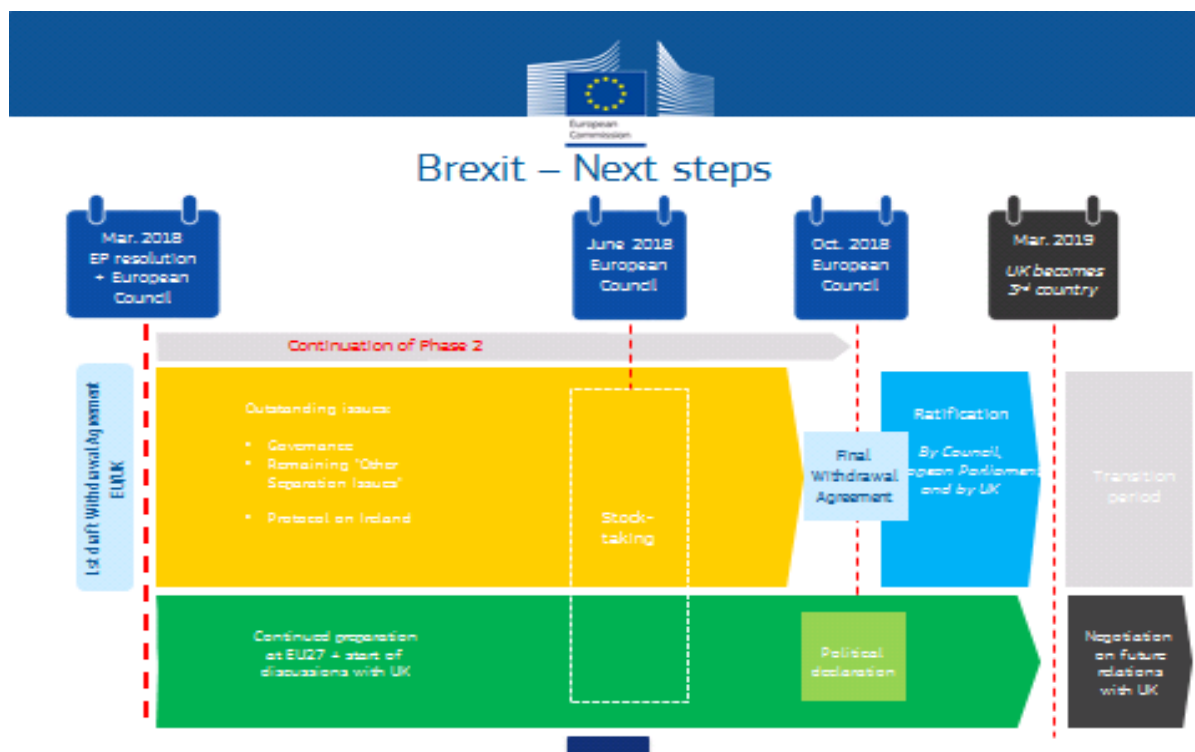
The negotiation of a withdrawal agreement is ongoing

The EU and the United Kingdom are currently negotiating the withdrawal agreement. Progress on the legal text and agreed by the EU and the United Kingdom at negotiator's level has been published on 19 March 2019⁶. This progress includes also detailed arrangements for a transition period to run until 31 December 2020 (see below). Further progress has been published in a joint statement of the EU and the UK negotiators on 19 June 2018⁷. While progress has been made, important issues are still not agreed upon, including the continued protection, in the United Kingdom, of the 'stock' of geographical indications protected in the United Kingdom while it was a Member State and the standards of the continued protection of personal data transmitted to the United Kingdom while it was a Member State. In addition, issues surrounding the governance of the withdrawal agreement, including the role of the Court of Justice of the European Union, are still unresolved. Finally, no progress has been made in agreeing on a 'backstop', to avoid, independently of the outcome of the negotiations of the future partnership, a hard border on the Island of Ireland.

In parallel to the withdrawal agreement, the EU and the United Kingdom have started to discuss the content of an 'EU-UK Future Partnership Declaration' which would set out the main elements of a future partnership between the EU and the United Kingdom.

It is currently planned that the Withdrawal Agreement is signed by the EU and the United Kingdom in October 2019, alongside the 'EU-UK Future Partnership Declaration'. This would give just sufficient time for the ratification process in the EU (European Parliament and Council) and in the United Kingdom.

The conclusion and ratification of a withdrawal agreement is a demanding process



⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/publications/draft-agreement-withdrawal-united-kingdom-great-britain-and-northern-ireland-european-union-and-european-atomic-energy-community-0_en.

⁷ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/joint_statement.pdf

There might be a transition period...

If a withdrawal agreement is agreed and ratified by the EU and the United Kingdom, it would provide for a transition period between the withdrawal date (i.e. 30 March 2019) and 31 December 2020. During the transition period, the Union rules (the so-called Union *acquis*), as they continue to evolve, would in general continue to apply to and in the United Kingdom, but with the important difference that the United Kingdom would no longer participate in any EU institutions, bodies or agencies⁸. Nevertheless, a transition period would give another 21 months for everyone to prepare for the day when EU law would cease to apply to and in the United Kingdom.

...but we need to prepare for all scenarios

Stakeholders and national and European administration need to prepare for two possible main scenarios:

- If the Withdrawal Agreement is ratified and enters into force before 30 March 2019, EU law will cease to apply to and in the United Kingdom on **1 January 2021**, i.e. after a transition period of 21 months, the terms of which are set out in the Withdrawal Agreement.
- If the Withdrawal Agreement **is not ratified** in time by both parties, there will be no transition period and EU law will cease to apply to and in the United Kingdom of **30 March 2019** (also referred to as the ‘no deal’ or ‘cliff-edge’ scenario).

And each scenario has different consequences

Consequences of scenario 1: withdrawal on 30 March 2019 under the Withdrawal Agreement, including a transition period until 31 December 2020

- The United Kingdom will be a third country.
- Continuation of the application of EU law in and to the United Kingdom: in general, EU law would continue to apply during the transition period.
- Exit from the institutional set-up: The United Kingdom would from 30 March 2019 no longer participate in EU institutions, bodies and agencies.
- Management of the transition period: The Withdrawal Agreement as ratified would need to be applied and enforced.
- Negotiation of the future relationship: The European Union should negotiate with the United Kingdom an agreement on the future relationship which should ideally be in place (agreed, signed and ratified) at the end of the transition period and apply as from 1 January 2021

⁸ The United Kingdom would as of the withdrawal date however no longer participate in the Union institutions, bodies, agencies etc. Certain other exceptions to the application of the *acquis* to and in the United Kingdom would apply, as set out in the draft Withdrawal Agreement.

Consequences of scenario 2: withdrawal on 30 March 2019 without a withdrawal agreement

- The United Kingdom will be a third country.
- Border issues: The EU must apply its regulation at all borders with the United Kingdom as a third country, including checks and controls for customs, sanitary and phytosanitary standards and norms verification, movement of persons (potentially including visa requirements) purposes. Transport between the United Kingdom and the EU would be impacted.
- Regulatory issues: The United Kingdom becomes a third country whose relations with the EU would be governed by general international public law, including rules of the World Trade Organization. In heavily regulated sectors, this would represent a significant drawback compared to the market integration that is currently enjoyed.
- Negotiations with the United Kingdom: Depending on the circumstances leading to the withdrawal without an agreement, the EU may wish to enter into negotiations with the United Kingdom as a third country to seek an agreement in specific areas.

2. The difference between preparedness and contingency

Untangling a relationship built over forty years will inevitably result in significant changes in the interactions with the United Kingdom at all levels, including economically and legally. Preparedness cannot prevent the occurrence of these changes, which are a consequence of the United Kingdom's decision. As it negotiates an orderly withdrawal with the United Kingdom, the Union must preserve the interests of the citizens, businesses and Member States. **Preparations must therefore be stepped up immediately at all levels and taking into account all possible outcomes.**

Citizens, businesses and Member States will be affected to different degrees, and the extent of the disruption will depend on many factors, including on whether a withdrawal agreement comes into force, on the future relationship between the Union and the United Kingdom. This uncertainty makes preparedness all the more necessary.

Preparedness means envisaging all possible scenarios and assessing all relevant related risks, planning a response and reacting to potential outcomes. All possible and necessary steps must be taken to ensure that a response is planned and that risks can be mitigated to the extent possible by stakeholders and public authorities in the Union. Everyone must therefore prepare for the changes that the departure of United Kingdom will inevitably bring.

Preparedness vs contingency

When defining the action that will have to be taken, the Commission distinguishes between two different kinds of measures: preparedness measures and contingency planning.

a) Preparedness measures

Preparedness measures are measures that will have to be taken as a consequence of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom, regardless of whether there will be a withdrawal agreement with the United Kingdom.

Preparedness measures could be, for economic operators who currently operate on the basis of licences and certificates issued by United Kingdom authorities, to apply for licences and certificates in an EU27 Member State where they want to continue to operate, given that United Kingdom licences and certificates would not be valid after the withdrawal (regardless of any withdrawal agreement or agreement on the future relationship). Member States may also wish to consider mitigating measures with regard to the additional administrative burden that would follow from new control measures and an increase in requests from economic operators. At EU level, examples of preparedness measures are the relocation of the London-based decentralised agencies and the reattribution of tasks from United Kingdom authorities to EU27 authorities. These are necessary as regardless of any agreement with the United Kingdom, given that it is not possible to entrust a third country with such Union tasks or the hosting of Union bodies.

b) Contingency planning

While EU law stays the same, the uncertainty of the negotiation process requires mapping all scenarios.

Contingency planning consists of envisaging the measures that would be necessary to mitigate the significant disturbances that a disorderly withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the Union without a transition period would inevitably create around the date of withdrawal (30 March 2019).

Contingency measures would in principle be temporary and only be in place until a longer-term solution would be found, for example in the form of a future partnership agreement. Contingency measures cannot achieve the same results as a negotiated withdrawal based on a withdrawal agreement, nor would they be able to reinstall the current situation where the United Kingdom is a Member State.

Drawing up contingency plans for the worst possible outcome is not a sign of mistrust in the negotiations. The Commission hopes for an agreement and devotes very significant resources and committed efforts to achieve this goal. Negotiations, on the other hand, can always fail.

Contingency measures would not necessarily involve legislative actions at the European level and would be primarily the responsibility of Member States. In the area of customs, for instance, there would be no need to amend the Union Customs Code as this already includes rules on third countries; contingency measures would be necessary at national level to cope with the risk of long lines of vehicles waiting for customs procedures to be fulfilled at the border.

The Commission is currently evaluating the need for contingency measures and is particularly attentive to sensitive areas such as customs, aviation, sanitary and phytosanitary controls and financial services.

4. Who should prepare?

Preparedness for Brexit is not limited to the European Union institutions. Quite to the contrary: it is a joint effort at EU, national, regional and local levels, as well as for economic operators. In order to be prepared for the withdrawal and to mitigate the worst impacts of a potential cliff-edge scenario, all actors need to take their responsibilities.

Preparedness is primarily for private actors, business operators and professionals

Although the withdrawal of the United Kingdom may appear to be playing out at a high and rather abstract level between the United Kingdom and the EU, its consequences will be very real for citizens, professionals and business operators. The Member States economies are closely inter-connected thanks to the Single Market with integrated supply chains across borders and extensive cross-border provision of services.

A cliff-edge scenario could have a significant impact on such economic operators which can be partially mitigated by preparedness measures.

Public authorities can provide support and guidance to clarify as much as possible the legal regime that will govern relations between the European Union and the United Kingdom. They can also make the necessary changes to the legal framework to ensure that it continues to function smoothly in the EU27, but the legal framework cannot be adapted to fit each individual and specific commercial concerns.

Private actors, business operators and professionals therefore need to take the responsibility for their individual situation, assess the potential impacts of a cliff-edge scenario on their business model, make the necessary economic decisions and take all required administrative steps before 30 March 2019.

Many companies are relocating to EU27 or expanding their business in EU27. Other companies have warned about the impact that a disorderly Brexit will have on their activities or business models.

In some cases, individuals are concerned for example by the need to exchange their United Kingdom diploma or certificate for one issued by the EU27 authorities and as a consequence they have been encouraged, via the Stakeholder Notices, to take the necessary action as quickly as possible.

The EU, national and regional authorities and trade organisations have published supporting information and designed tools to assist individuals and businesses but further efforts are needed.

From intra-EU sales to exporting to the United Kingdom: preparing for new procedures

Major international traders are aware of what trade with third countries outside the EU means, in terms of exports declarations, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) controls etc. But many more companies have no experience with trade with third countries, as they only trade within the Single Market without borders. Reaching out to those companies is therefore particularly acute, while the challenge that the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU represents for them is the highest: they will need to engage in procedures they are not used to but which are mandatory for extra-EU exports.

Information on trading with third countries is available on the website of the Commission⁹. In addition, national governments, for instance in Austria, Ireland and the Netherlands, have set up dedicated webpages to help companies assess the impact and/or new procedures that will follow the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU.

Member States, national and regional authorities have an important role to play...

While the United Kingdom becoming a third country will have significant implications for the EU as a whole, the impact of Brexit on individual Member States will strongly vary depending on their vicinity to and the closeness of their economic ties with the United Kingdom, for example regarding shared infrastructure or the control of movement of goods and people.

Member States share the competence to legislate with the EU in many policy areas, and their national and regional authorities are more often than not in charge of implementing and enforcing the EU acquis. Adaptations to national rules and guidance for stakeholders will be needed, as well as significant investments in personnel and infrastructures (e.g. border controls, competent authorities in charge of specific procedures). Regional authorities, especially those with legislative powers, but also local authorities must be involved in the preparations.

Preparedness details and practicalities are discussed by experts of EU27 Member States during **Technical Expert Seminars organised by the Commission**. These informal seminars provide a platform for the Commission to provide explanations on, for example, the content of notices and enable Member States to raise issues of concern, address questions and share best practices. They are instrumental in finding European solutions to the issues identified.

In addition to the discussions at the EU level, several Member States have performed a comprehensive screening of the domestic needs for legislative changes and other adaptations of their legal instruments. Several have developed tools to support their economic operators to prepare for Brexit.

On the Irish website '*prepareforbrexit.com*' SMEs can assess their exposure to Brexit and find information on related events and support. Ireland also offers funding to small and medium-sized enterprises of up to 5000 EUR for Brexit preparedness related expenses (i.e. preparing plans, attending events, building new contacts if there is a need for alternative suppliers, etc.).

The Dutch authorities have created the web-based '*Brexit impact scanner*' which can be used by SMEs to assess their exposure to potential problems related to the withdrawal of the United Kingdom.

...together with the EU institutions, the European Commission and the EU agencies

The EU pools Member States' sovereignty in areas where it makes sense to work together, creating a consistent framework for Member States and stakeholders to operate. However, although the EU has the exclusive competence to legislate in some areas (e.g. customs, trade, fisheries), and shared competence with Member States in others (e.g. internal market, transport, energy, security), its powers and resources to put in place preparedness and contingency measures in many cases are limited to raising awareness and facilitating discussions between concerned parties.

The Commission has identified several work strands where actions lie within its own remit.

a) Legislative changes and other instruments

The first one consists of a comprehensive **screening of the Union acquis** to identify the measures, which have to be taken to address the situation in the various sectors and policy areas in order to ensure that the EU rules continue to function smoothly in a Union of 27 after the United Kingdom's departure.

In the first phase, the Commission focused on regulations and directives and identified eight measures where adaptations will be necessary irrespective of the outcome of the withdrawal negotiations¹⁰. Given the timetable, it is necessary that progress on these legislative proposals is rapid and that their adoption takes place in good time before 29 March next year.

It is important to underline that it is not legally necessary to amend or delete all references to the United Kingdom or United Kingdom institutions and actors in existing EU legislation. These references will simply become obsolete and redundant after withdrawal. Relevant modifications will be considered when the relevant legal acts are reviewed and updated in the future for other reasons.

Furthermore, the necessary action will be taken by the Commission using the empowerments it has received from the European Parliament and the Council in basic legislative instruments (implementing or delegated acts). This area is subject to an ongoing in-depth scrutiny by the Commission.

Examples of legislative changes needed as a result of Brexit

- Proposal on the apportionment between the United Kingdom and the EU27 of tariff rate quotas included in the World Trade Organisation schedule of the Union. This proposal is accompanied by a recommendation for a negotiating mandate from the Council to pursue negotiations with other WTO members. The apportionment is a necessary adaptation to ensure legal certainty and the continuous smooth operation of imports under the tariff rate quotas to both the Union of 27 and the United Kingdom.
- Proposal for a Regulation complementing existing type approval legislation in the area of motor vehicles. This will enable holders of UK type approvals to apply to EU27 approval authorities on the basis of the documentation and tests that underpinned the original UK type approvals.

¹⁰

https://ec.europa.eu/info/files/brexit-legislative-preparedness-proposals_en

- On energy efficiency, adaptation of the reference values of the 2030 targets for the Union will be made to take account of the United Kingdom's withdrawal.
- Amendment of the existing Regulation that lists both the countries whose nationals are required to be in possession of a visa when crossing the external borders of the European Union States and the countries whose nationals are exempt from a visa requirement for stays of no more than three months. The United Kingdom will have to be placed on one or the other list.
- Proposals to amend the Regulation on the Connecting Europe Facility to design a new maritime route to link Ireland with the continental part of the North Sea-Mediterranean corridor.
- Proposal to amend the Regulation on common rules and standards for ship inspection and survey organisations to ensure that the sponsorship of the inspections of two recognised organisations is transferred outside the United Kingdom to the EU27.

The Commission invites the European Parliament and the Council to give these Brexit-related proposals priority treatment and fast tracking wherever possible.

b) Preparedness notices prepared by the Commission services

Where Member States or stakeholders need to take action, the Commission started raising awareness end of 2017 through the publication of a large number of **technical notices** that set out the legal and practical implications of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU. The notices have been prepared by the Commission services where relevant in collaboration with the competent EU agency. They are all published on the Europa website¹¹ and thus publicly available.

The notices set out what the situation in the sector concerned will be after the withdrawal. They are based exclusively on the factual and legal situation that would prevail after the withdrawal in the absence of any withdrawal agreement and do not contain any interpretation about the outcome of the negotiations or their impact on the rules in a sector. Should the legal situation change further to the conclusion of a withdrawal agreement with the United Kingdom or due to a change of the legislation concerned, the notices will be adapted or be withdrawn if they are no longer relevant.

To date, the Commission – where relevant, in close cooperation with the relevant EU agency - has published around 70 such notices, covering for example the areas of health and food safety, transport, financial stability and financial services, environment, internal market, customs, civil justice, company law and professional qualifications. In several areas the notices were accompanied by the set of Questions and Answers published on the website of individual Commission Directorate Generals and services, or EU agencies. The notices have raised various levels of attention and reactions from companies and media.

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/info/brexit/brexit-preparedness_en

c) The relocation process

Institutional matters and budgetary issues are another important area where the Commission is screening the needs and in some case has already taken the necessary steps. An example is the relocation of the two London-based agencies: the European Medicines Agency and the European Banking Authority, which will be moved on 30 March 2019 to, respectively, Amsterdam and Paris.

There are other similar files where relocation or reassignment of tasks is needed as a consequence of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the EU, such as the relocation of the Galileo Security Monitoring Centre or the reassignment of the tasks of the United Kingdom-based EU Reference Laboratories for certain animal diseases to laboratories in the EU-27 Member States. This work will have to be finalised for 30 March 2019, given that, even with a transitional arrangement, the United Kingdom will no longer participate in the institutional set-up of the EU after the withdrawal date.

d) Other work strands

The Commission is also working on other work strands, including a very practical aspect of internal preparedness, namely the disconnection and adaptation of **databases** to which the United Kingdom has access.

Furthermore, the Commission is analysing the needs as regards the **external preparedness**, i. e. the consequences of the withdrawal for international agreements to which the EU, often jointly with the Member States, is a party, and in particular if, how and when to notify international agreement partner/partners of the withdrawal of the United Kingdom. Several hundreds of international agreements are in place on a vast number of topics.

Finally, in terms of preparedness, the Commission Representation in the United Kingdom will be replaced by a Delegation of the European Union in the United Kingdom on 30 March 2019.

Transport, including aviation

Depending on the mode of transport (air, road, rail, maritime, inland waterway), the EU sets rules for the safety, security, and access to the EU market. These rules usually distinguish between a third country operator, and an EU operator.

EU transport businesses should carefully assess whether the change of status of the United Kingdom from a Member State to a third country impacts on its operations, and should take the necessary preparedness measures.

The Commission has published **11 preparedness notices** relevant for the area of transport (aviation, aviation safety, aviation and maritime security, road transport, rail transport, seafarer qualifications, maritime transport, consumer protection and passenger rights, inland waterways, industrial products), which set out in clear terms the implications of the UK's withdrawal from the EU's legal and regulatory framework, e.g. in the area of aviation safety, in the absence of any particular arrangement, thus providing stakeholders with the requisite clarity on the baseline situation to which they were advised to adapt.

The Commission will adopt in the foreseeable future **two proposals** to amend existing Regulations where the changes would be necessary under any scenario. Amending the Regulation concerning the recognition at the Union level of organisations providing services for the inspection and survey of ships will increase legal certainty, secure business continuity for the affected ship owners and preserve competitiveness of EU-27 Member States' flags. The proposal to amend the Regulation establishing the Connecting Europe Facility aims at rectifying the situation when the United Kingdom will stop being part of the Europe-wide network of core transport infrastructure.

Financial services

Over the years, the United Kingdom in general and the City of London in particular has become an important financial services¹² centre. Many operators, also from third countries, have established themselves in the United Kingdom and operate in the rest of the Single Market through branches or cross-border provision of services, based on the pass-porting rights enshrined in the EU financial services legislation.

These pass-porting rights will cease to exist after withdrawal. This means that the provision of financial services from the United Kingdom to EU27 will be regulated by the third country regime in the national legal framework of the respective Member State. There will be no Single Market access. Operators in all financial services sectors need to prepare for this scenario if they wish to ensure that there is no disruption in their current business model and the servicing of their clients.

The Commission has published 8 **notices** in this area. The Commission has also proposed modifications to some of the current supervisory arrangements to cater for potential financial stability implications following the withdrawal of the United Kingdom. The co-legislators are encouraged to adopt these proposals as rapidly as possible.

In a limited number of areas, for example with regard to market access for investment firms, current EU legislation provides the possibility of recognising the regulatory and supervisory framework of a third country as equivalent, meaning that operators from that country will gain access to the Single Market. An equivalence assessment is always done on a case-by-case basis, assessing the circumstances of the individual case and is not a given right to any third country.

Customs

When the United Kingdom becomes a third country, shipments of goods from the United Kingdom to the EU will be subject to customs procedures and controls. This represents a significant increase of procedures. Even if a variety of facilitation are currently foreseen in

¹² For example insurance, asset management, payment services, investment mediation, post-trade services.

EU regulation (declarations filled before exports, Authorised Economic Operator businesses who can internalise some procedures), and even if the enforcement of this policy is risk based (only a fraction of shipments are physically checked), the possibility to physically control in a designated area (at the border or in the vicinity) must always be ensured in order to properly implement the relevant legislation.

All stakeholders concerned should prepare for a situation where shipments of goods from and to the United Kingdom are subject to customs procedures and controls.

National administrations have started preparing for this new situation, in particular by planning new recruitments, in the hundreds and close to a thousand for some.

The Commission has taken a variety of measures, including the publication of several "preparedness notices", and several EU27 technical expert seminars. A special focus is on the preparation of IT systems (disconnecting the United Kingdom and accompanying efforts by Member States to upgrade their own applications). Finally, the Commission is facilitating the accession of the United Kingdom to the Common Transit Convention.

Pharmaceuticals

EU pharmaceutical law requires the marketing authorisation holder for a medicine to be established in the EU. Moreover, medicines manufactured in a third country undergo specific controls upon importation.

Marketing authorisation holder and actors in the supply chain have to prepare for this situation, in particular by ensuring that the necessary testing facilities are available in the EU.

Commission services, in close cooperation with the European Medicines Agency issued several notices and additional questions and answers documents to provide guidance.

Member States should take all necessary steps to ensure that the European network of national regulators continues to function without interruption once the United Kingdom withdraws from the Union.

Personal data

Currently, personal data can flow freely between the Member States of the EU. Once EU law ceases to apply to the United Kingdom, the transfer of personal data from the EU to the United Kingdom will still be possible, but it will be subject to specific conditions set in EU law.

Companies that are currently transmitting personal data to the United Kingdom should therefore be aware that this will become a "transfer" of personal data to a third country, and

explore if it could be permitted under relevant provisions of EU legislation. If the United Kingdom's level of personal data protection is essentially equivalent to that of the EU, the European Commission may adopt an adequacy decision which allows for transfer of personal data to the United Kingdom without restrictions. However, this decision can only be taken once the United Kingdom becomes a third country, and requires sufficient preparation. Companies should therefore assess whether, in the absence of an adequacy decision, measures are necessary to ensure that these transfers remain possible.

EU law provides for a facilitated recognition of professional qualifications obtained by EU citizens in other EU Member States.

Citizens holding a professional qualification obtained in the United Kingdom should consider whether it is advisable to obtain the recognition of a professional qualification while the United Kingdom is still a Member State.

The Commission published a **notice** on EU rules on regulated professions and the recognition of professional qualifications. It advises in particular EU nationals with UK professional qualifications obtained prior to Brexit to consult relevant national authorities on the need to obtain recognition ahead of 30 March 2019.

8. Conclusion

Preparing for the withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union, in whatever scenario it may take place, is a matter for everyone. The withdrawal will change the relationship and will have effects for the citizens and businesses of the EU of 27 Member States, some of which cannot be remedied.

It is therefore important to take the necessary action in time and that everyone – businesses, Member States and EU institutions – do what they can to be ready and to minimise the negative impact that the withdrawal may have.

The Commission invites the European Parliament and the Council to give the legislative proposals that are related to the withdrawal priority treatment so that the acts can be in force by the withdrawal date.

The Commission will continue and increase its preparedness work as a matter of the highest priority, and it stands ready to adapt to the developments in the negotiations in order to best serve the 27 Member States, its citizens and businesses. It will review the situation after the European Council (Article 50) in October 2018.

Annex: "Brexit preparedness notices" published by Commission services per topic

	Topic
	GOODS
1	Industrial products
2	Pharmaceuticals (human/veterinary)
3	Plant protection products
4	Biocides
5	Automotive vehicles
6	Agricultural and forestry vehicles, two- or three-wheeled vehicles and quadricycles, non-road mobile machinery
7	Industrial chemicals (REACH) (<i>published by ECHA</i>)
8	Ecolabel
9	Waste (other than shipment licenses)
	FOOD, FEED, LIVE ANIMALS, PLANTS
10	Food and organic production
11	Animal feed
12	GMOs
13	Natural mineral waters
14	Plant reproductive material
15	Animal breeding/zootechnics
16	Animal health
17	Plant health
	CUSTOMS AND INDIRECT TAXATION
18	VAT, excise, customs
19	Rules of origin
20	VAT (in preparation)
21	Import/export licences
22	Specimen of endangered species (CITES) (import and export)
23	Timber import
24	Customs enforcement of intellectual property rights
	FINANCIAL SERVICES
25	Statutory audit
26	Credit rating agencies
27	Asset management
28	Post-trade services
29	Investment services
30	Banking and payment services
31	(Re)insurance
32	Occupational retirement institutions
	COMPANY LAW, CONSUMER PROTECTION, DATA PROTECTION, CIVIL JUSTICE
33	Personal data protection
34	Company law
35	Private international law
36	Consumer protection and passenger rights
	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
37	Trademarks and designs
38	Plant varieties
39	Copyright
40	Supplementary protection certificate
	PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
41	Professional qualifications

42	Qualifications of slaughterhouse staff
43	Qualifications of animal transporters
44	Qualifications of seafarers
TRANSPORT	
45	Air transport (access)
46	Aviation safety
47	Aviation and maritime security
48	Road transport
49	Maritime transport (access and safety)
50	Rail transport
51	Inland waterway transport
DIGITAL AND INFORMATION	
52	.eu top level domain names
53	E-commerce ("information society services")
54	Telecommunication
55	Audio-visual media services
56	eIDAS/trust services
57	Network security
58	Geoblocking
ENERGY	
59	Euratom-related matters
60	Electricity and gas market
61	Guarantees of origin
OTHER	
62	Substances of human origin
63	Clinical trials (<i>in preparation</i>)
64	Public procurement
65	EMAS
66	Ship recycling
67	European citizens' initiative
68	Fishery's acquis
69	European Works Councils
70	Industrial security (EUCI)